

Strategist

Barking orders over the din of battle, a dwarf in well-worn scale mail commands the shield-wall to face the eastern bridge and hold fast against the incoming Drow charge. As the rushing crowd breaks against this line of steel, she presses her lips to a horn, and sounds the clarion call of a counterattack.

A young human in fine clothing sits across a chessboard from a foreign tyrant. He sizes up the man opposite him, formulates a hundred plans, and concedes the game with an innocent handshake. Though he has lost this battle, in his mind's eye he has already won the war that is to come.

High up in the canopy, a young dragonborn watches a band of gnolls fan out across the forest floor below and motions for her party to hold. Spying the perfect moment, she swings out of the foliage leading her friends in a deadly ambush.

Masters of battlefield control, strategists rely on guile and cunning to win the day. With the right plan even certain failure can be turned into success.

A Tactical Mind

Although well trained in the use of weaponry and armor, a strategist relies foremost upon their intellect to guide them through dangerous situations. The ability to predict the unpredictable, to plan for the unknowable and to counter the unexpected grant the strategist the opportunity to affect the overall flow of a battle beyond the individual moments of action.

The greatest strength of the strategist is their tactical thinking—they are the masters of plots and ploys, of gambits and fianchettos, of pronged attacks and of victory won through sacrifice. With planning and preparation they are granted unparalleled versatility on the battlefield. Where they are able to anticipate a possible outcome, the strategist has a suitable response at their disposal.

Students of War

Strategists study a battlefield in the way most people would consider a puzzle to be solved. Rather than focusing on their individual role in combat, they look to understand each encounter in its totality. They are true students of war, able to divorce themselves from the immediacy of a fray and act with greater consideration to the overall ebb and flow of the fight. Some are analytical and calculating in their approach, others rely on a natural intuition, and yet more have learned to understand battle the hard way—through blood-soaked experience.

Though many noble-born sons and daughters are raised studying historical battles and trained to assume the duties of command, a true strategist is almost always forged in the fires of battle. Natural talent in tactical and strategic thinking is a rare thing indeed, and to those in power the skills of a strategist are highly prized and often sought. Though there are a great many commanders and military leaders in the world, very few of them have the aptitudes of a strategist; those that do rise quickly in rank and are often lauded as brilliant generals.

Some rare strategists, choose to use their skills in the pursuit of an adventurer's life—whether for material gain, to see the wider world, or out of some personal undertaking. Traveling by their side, their comrades soon learn that the skills of the strategist can be invaluable when exploring the dark, forgotten corners of the world.

Design Notes

The strategist is designed to provide a martial support class capable of offering their allies more choices on the battlefield and of hampering their enemies' best laid plans.

The strategist has a number of descriptive and mechanical similarities to the Battle Master martial archetype of the Fighter, but the strategist is designed to differentiate itself in a few key respects. Firstly, the strategist places more importance on providing support to their allies and less on their own, individual battle capabilities. Secondly, the strategist is designed to provide more emphasis on the planning and preparation elements of encounters. And, thirdly, much like certain wizards or sorcerers, strategists have the ability to revise reality and alter certain rolls—this is not the product of some arcane trick however, instead it represents the revelation of a master plan turning an encounter on its head.

Strategists are not designed to be the strongest characters in their own right or to wield the most powerful magical abilities, but they are designed to be able to flummox their enemies and to be able to get their friends out of a pinch. Besides, who doesn't love it when a plan comes together?

Famous examples of strategist type characters include Shikamaru Nara, Napoleon, Andrew 'Ender' Wiggins, T.J. Detwieler, Parson Gotti, Sun Tsu, John 'Hannibal' Smith, and Zhuge Liang.

Creating a Strategist

As you build your strategist consider where your preternatural understanding and affinity for battle comes from. Are you a savant, born to war as others are born to music or mathematics? Were you a noble born scion, raised to be leader of men and trained at the finest military academies? Or, did you learn to understand combat through sweat and tears, at the bloody front of some theater of war? If the latter, talk with your DM about the conflicts in which you may have played a part and how they may have influenced the broader campaign setting.

Next, consider what drew you to the adventuring life. Strategists can often find comfortable employment in military organizations or as an adviser to those in power, and there's usually some reason they have chosen to forgo such a career. Perhaps you have an overwhelming wanderlust? Perhaps you are a deserter from the front-lines of a futile war? Perhaps you disagree with the current ruler's philosophies? Or, maybe, you see another threat looming, that has not been spotted by those in power and believe that assembling a team of adventurers poses your best chance of preventing this fate?

Quick Build

You can make a strategist quickly by following these suggestions. First, Intelligence should be your highest ability score, followed by Constitution. Second, choose the soldier background.

The Strategist

| Level | Proficiency Bonus | Preparation Points | Tactics Prepared | Features |
|-------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|--|
| 1st | +2 | 1 | 2 | Stick to the Plan, Tactical Maneuvers |
| 2nd | +2 | 2 | 2 | I Love It When a Plan Comes Together |
| 3rd | +2 | 3 | 3 | Academy of War |
| 4th | +2 | 4 | 3 | Ability Score Improvement, Battle Analysis |
| 5th | +3 | 5 | 4 | Contingency Plan |
| 6th | +3 | 6 | 4 | Academy of War Feature |
| 7th | +3 | 7 | 5 | Stick to the Plan Improvement |
| 8th | +3 | 8 | 5 | Ability Score Improvement |
| 9th | +4 | 9 | 6 | Just One More Thing... |
| 10th | +4 | 10 | 6 | It's a Trap! |
| 11th | +4 | 11 | 7 | Battle Analysis Improvement |
| 12th | +4 | 12 | 7 | Ability Score Improvement |
| 13th | +5 | 13 | 8 | Stick to the Plan Improvement |
| 14th | +5 | 14 | 8 | Academy of War Feature |
| 15th | +5 | 15 | 9 | Ambush Expertise |
| 16th | +5 | 16 | 9 | Ability Score Improvement |
| 17th | +6 | 17 | 10 | Academy of War Feature |
| 18th | +6 | 18 | 10 | Battle Analysis Improvement |
| 19th | +6 | 19 | 11 | Ability Score Improvement |
| 20th | +6 | 20 | 11 | Checkmate |

Class Features

As a strategist you gain the following class features.

Hit Points

Hit Dice: 1d8 per strategist level

Hit Points at 1st Level: 8 + your Constitution modifier

Hit Points at Higher Levels: 1d8 (or 5) + your Constitution modifier per strategist level after 1st

Proficiencies

Armor: Light armor, medium armor, shields

Weapons: Simple weapons, martial weapons

Tools: Two gaming sets of your choice

Saving Throws: Intelligence, Constitution

Skills: Choose two skills from Athletics, Deception, History, Insight, Investigation, Perception, Persuasion, and Survival

Equipment

You start with the following equipment, in addition to the equipment granted by your background:

- (a) scale mail or (b) leather armor
- (a) a martial weapon and a shield or (b) a longbow and a quiver of 20 arrows
- (a) two handaxes or (b) two daggers
- (a) an explorer's pack or (b) a diplomat's pack or (c) a dungeoneer's pack
- a gaming set of your choice

Stick to the Plan

Starting at 1st level, you can devise a plan to get you and your party through almost any situation. Spend 10 minutes outlining your plan and describe a narrative trigger that represents its successful completion.

When you do so, choose up to six friendly creatures (which may include yourself) within 30 feet of you who can see or hear you and who can understand you. Each creature affected can then add your Intelligence modifier (with a minimum

bonus of +1) to any ability checks they choose whilst enacting the plan. Creatures must declare if they are applying this bonus before any roll is made. This effect continues until the plan is completed, the DM deems the plan to have failed, or until an affected creature fails a check whilst using the granted bonus. A single creature failing a roll whilst using the granted bonus scuppers the plan, nullifying the bonus for all affected creatures. Once used, this ability cannot be used again until the completion of a long rest at which point any ongoing Stick to the Plan bonuses are also ended.

At 7th level this bonus can also be used for saving throws and at 13th level it can additionally be used for attack rolls.

Tactical Maneuvers

Your aptitude for strategy has granted you access to a range of tactical maneuvers, stratagems and talents that, when prepared, can be deployed to great effect in combat. These tactics grant you significant versatility, so long as you are able to predict in advance the abilities that you will have need of.

Tactics

At 1st level you gain access to a wide range of abilities known as tactics which can be employed in various situations — the range of options available to you are detailed at the end of the class description.

Your mastery of tactics comes from an analytical mind and your problem solving abilities. Hence, Intelligence is the ability that affects the potency and effectiveness of these skills. You use your Intelligence modifier when setting the DC for a tactic you employ or when making an attack roll with one.

Tactics save DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Intelligence modifier

Tactics attack modifier = your proficiency bonus + your Intelligence modifier

You can change your list of prepared tactics only when you finish a long rest. Preparing a new set of tactics requires time spent in planning and the readying of materials: at least 10

minutes per tactic.

Preparation Points

Your access to tactics and the planning you are able to perform whilst adventuring is represented by a number of preparation points. Your strategist level determines the number of points you have as shown in the Preparation Points column of the Strategist table.

These preparation points can be used to fuel the tactic effects detailed at the end of this class description as well as a number of other class features. Each feature lists its individual preparation point cost. You regain all expended preparation points when you finish a short or long rest.

I Love It When a Plan Comes Together

Starting at 2nd level, whenever the narrative trigger of your stick to the plan ability is completed you immediately regain $\frac{1}{2}$ your strategist level rounded down additional preparation points. Note that this feature is triggered whether or not the Stick to the Plan bonus remains in effect as long as the narrative trigger for the completion of the plan is met.

You can not exceed your preparation point maximum through the use of this ability. Any preparation points regained in excess of this number are lost.

Strategists and Planning

Between the 'Stick to the Plan' and 'I Love It When a Plan Comes Together' features, the strategist is able to grant and receive significant bonuses through the declaration and completion of a plan. In reality, the act of planning should still remain a group activity where appropriate—with the same energetic discussions over the tabletop that we all know and love being encouraged between the players. These class features, however, are designed to make the plan a more tangible part of the game's mechanics. The strategist should be encouraged to be bold and specific when declaring the plan and, in particular, when declaring the narrative trigger for the plan's completion.

An example plan declaration:

"Davyr and Evelyn, the party's bard and sorcerer will distract the vampires in the ballroom by acting as traveling performers—Evelyn will use *Mordenkainen's Private Sanctum* on the ballroom to keep their audience isolated. Reynard the rogue will sneak to the roof, enter the attic and destroy the Lady's cursed portrait that grants her regenerative powers at the cost of her sanity. Grim and I, the fighter and strategist, will enter the crypts from the sewers, kill the hell hounds that guard the vampires' tombs and destroy their resting place without them being any the wiser. We will all then meet up at the ballroom and fight the vampires. The trigger for the completion of the plan is that we're all together fighting the vampires".

In this example Reynard may use the bonus granted by Stick to the Plan to boost his chances of scaling the building, Davyr to improve his performance in the ballroom, or Grim to have more favorable odds in a saving throw against the hell hounds. Whether or not the plan is scuppered by a failed roll, if and when the party converges to fight the vampires the 'I Love It When a Plan Comes Together' feature is triggered, and the strategist immediately regain preparation points up to half their maximal amount.

Academy of War

At 3rd level, you adopt the teachings and philosophies of an academy of war of your choice: the Academy of Swords, the Academy of Cups, the Academy of Coins, or the Academy of Wands each of which are detailed at the end of the class description. Your choice grants you features at 3rd level and again at 6th, and 14th level.

Ability Score Improvement

When you reach 4th level, and again at 8th, 12th, 16th and 19th level, you can increase one ability score of your choice by 2, or you can increase two ability scores of your choice by 1. As normal, you can't increase an ability score above 20 using this feature.

Battle Analysis

Beginning at 4th level, you may spend an action to study any creature that you can see or hear within 30 feet of you that is currently in combat. Take an Intelligence (Investigation) check with a DC of $10 +$ the target's Challenge Rating to learn key information about the creature. You may choose to reduce the difficulty of this roll by spending preparation points—for each preparation point spent the DC is reduced by one.

A successful roll allows you to know the target's current hit points and any damage resistances, damage immunities, or damage vulnerabilities the target possesses.

Starting at 11th level, a successful battle analysis roll additionally allows you to know the target's saving throw modifiers, any condition immunities the target has, and the senses it possesses.

At 18th level, a successful battle analysis roll additionally allows you to see the target as though via truesight whilst it remains 60 feet of you. Additionally, you spot any weakpoints in their defenses and gain +4 to hit on any attack roll made against this creature.

Contingency Plan

Starting at 5th level you always have a backup plan in case of emergencies. At the start of each day roll 1d20, referred to as the contingency die, and record the result. By expending your reaction you can then substitute this roll for any roll to be made by any player (including yourself) or the DM at any time. You may choose to do so after a die roll is made, but must do so before the outcome is determined.

Once expended, you can immediately roll a new contingency die. This can be repeated a number of times equal to $1 + \frac{1}{4}$ your strategist level rounded down. You regain all uses of this ability on the completion of a long rest.

Where this ability would force a creature to fail a saving throw, abilities that can automatically negate a failure (such as legendary resistances) can still be applied.

Just One More Thing...

Sometimes conversation can also be a game of strategy. Beginning at 9th level, whenever you converse with a creature in a language that you both understand for at least a minute, you may choose to roll an Intelligence (Investigation) check instead of a Wisdom (Insight) check to assess their true intentions or when contesting any deception.

It's a Trap!

At 10th level, your mental faculties have become so attuned to analysis and observation that you are granted an uncanny sense of when things are not as they should be, giving you an edge when trying to resist effects that are intended to deceive you.

You have advantage on Intelligence saving throws and Intelligence (Investigation) checks made to discern illusions, disguises, or bluffs of any type. To gain this benefit, you must not be blinded, deafened, or incapacitated.

Ambush Expertise

At 15th level, you have learned a range of techniques for setting up a convincing ambush. With 1 minute preparation time you can alter a 40-foot-cube of terrain to be primed for a surprise. Any creature of your choice entering this area must succeed on an Intelligence saving throw (on top of any required Wisdom (Perception) check against hidden creatures) to avoid being surprised at the start of combat.

In addition, by spending your reaction and 10 preparation points at the start of a surprise round, all successful attacks made against a single surprised creature of your choice deal maximum damage instead of requiring a damage roll. This effect lasts for the duration of the surprise round.

Checkmate

When you reach 20th level, your plans come to fruition at the height of combat, rapidly changing the entire tempo of a battle. As an action and at a cost of 10 preparation points you may immediately force any number of creatures up to your Intelligence modifier that are within 60 feet of you to take an Intelligence saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is surprised as though in a surprise round. As a result, they cannot move or take an action on their turn in this round and additionally can't take a reaction until that turn ends.

Academies of War

Different schools of strategy favor differing philosophies and theories of battle. There are four main schools of strategy taught at the various military academies of the world. Many academies will exclusively teach one of these approaches, but some provide a range of syllabuses depending upon the aptitudes and interests of the student. All four academies rely upon the same basic techniques and tactics, only diverging as the strategist grows in experience. As a result a strategist only need choose an academy at 3rd level.

Academy of Swords

The Academy of Swords focuses on the art of commanding from the front lines. Students of this academy are inspirational figures, leading daring charges and devising cunning counter-attacks from within the crash and chaos of battle. They learn abilities that help them to fight directly, felling foes with their own weaponry and shielding allies with their own armor.

Bonus Proficiency

When you join the Academy of Swords at 3rd level, you gain proficiency with heavy armor.

Squad Tactics

Starting at 3rd level, with you in the front-lines, your party learns to fight as one. Whenever you hit a creature with a melee weapon attack, the next attack roll made against this target by any ally (excluding yourself) before the end of your next turn gains advantage.

Extra Attack

Starting at 6th level, you can attack twice, instead of once, whenever you take the attack action on your turn.

Counterstrike

To a student of the Academy of Swords even the gravest adversity can present an opportunity in battle. Starting at 14th level, whenever you take damage from a creature that is within 5 feet of you, you can use your reaction to grant one ally within 60 feet, who can see and hear you, the ability to immediately make a single weapon attack against that creature.

Academy of Cups

Strategists from the Academy of Cups are the masters of preparation and improvisation. They seem to have a plan for every situation, a solution for every problem — sometimes their ability to predict what's needed ahead of time seems almost uncanny, perhaps even supernatural. Compared with the other academies, those from the Academy of Cups place more emphasis on the use of tactics and the potential versatility they can afford. Whether by genius or intuition, the resourcefulness of these 'MacGyvers' makes them steadfast adventurers and allies.

Always Prepared

Starting at 3rd level, you are always on alert and prepared for any eventuality. You can add your Intelligence modifier to your initiative rolls and you cannot be surprised.

In addition, you may use an action to immediately swap a prepared a tactic for any other, so long as you meet its prerequisites. Once used, this ability cannot be used again until the completion of a long rest.

The Right Tool for the Job

You never set out without the equipment you are going to need. Beginning at 3rd level, if you spend an action to dig through your pack or other spots you could have reasonably secreted away such objects on your person, you can retroactively purchase any number of items from the Player's Handbook for twice their listed price assuming you can explain how you knew you might need them. The total, overall expenditure cannot exceed $5 \times$ your strategist level in gold pieces. You regain the use of this ability on the completion of a short or long rest.

The Measure of My Foe

Starting at 6th level when you have confronted an enemy in the past you know how to prepare for them. If you have faced a particular individual before in combat, played them in a game of skill, or had the opportunity to extensively study their tactics by some other means you gain $\frac{1}{2}$ your strategist level rounded down in additional preparation points for the duration of any future encounter against them. These temporary preparation points do not count against your preparation point maximum.

Against creatures with an Intelligence score of less than

$\frac{1}{2}$ that of your own, you do not have to have encountered the individual enemy before—having fought against creatures of the same type before is sufficient to gain this benefit.

A Quick Fix

Even when you appear to be stuck or incapable of the task at hand, the resourcefulness of students of the Academy of Cups can still grant you a fighting chance. Beginning at 14th level, you may spend a bonus action to temporarily gain proficiency with one tool or kit of your choice. This proficiency lasts for 1 hour. Once spent, you regain the use of this ability on the completion of a long rest.

Furthermore, with 10 minutes preparation time you are now to improvise any object as though via the *fabricate* spell so long as you have access to reasonable base materials in your surroundings. The created object is entirely nonmagical and cannot be dispelled, however due to the improvised nature of objects created in this way, any ability check or attack roll made with them occurs at a -2 penalty.

This ability can also be used to fashion any kit or set of tools you need, subject to the same constraints. Such makeshift tools can only be used for a single ability check or for the purpose of preparing a single tactic.

Academy of Coins

Students of the Academy of Coins train to gain mastery of command and recruitment. United in purpose, a strategist of this academy and their followers can fight as a single unit to devastating effect. To achieve this, students of the Academy of Coins are trained as inspirational leaders, able to draw the best out of those under their command.

Sidekick

Starting at 3rd level, when you join the Academy of Coins you gain the ability to recruit and employ a sidekick. This character will fight alongside you and act under your direct command.

Finding recruitable NPCs requires that you are in a populated place—whenever you are in a settlement with a population of at least 200 people, you may spend 8 hours and 50 gold pieces attempting to find and recruit a sidekick. Your sidekick's base statistics and abilities are those of the Guard Nonplayer Character type, but the choice of their appearance, name, and race (with no racial traits granted) are up to you. The DM might decline certain choices, based on the nature of the settlement and on the types of people that might logically be present in the area.

Once recruited, the sidekick gains all of the benefits of your Command feature, including any retroactively granted ability score improvements from earlier levels. You may not have more than one sidekick recruited at a time.

Whilst sidekicks are your subordinates, they are independent people and not mindless creatures. If they are frequently abused or endangered beyond that which would be expected, they may choose to leave the party at any time. If your sidekick is ever slain or has left your command, you may repeat the use of this feature in order to find a replacement.

Command

At 3rd level, your sidekick gains a number of benefits when recruited:

- Your sidekick obeys your commands as best they can. They roll for initiative like any other creature, but you determine their actions, decisions, and so on. If you are incapacitated or absent, your sidekick acts on their own—under the

Variant Sidekick Statistics

The base statistics for your sidekick are usually always those of a Guard. Alternatively, however, the DM may allow you to construct your own base NPC statistics with a challenge rating of $\frac{1}{8}$ or less following the approach described from page 273 onwards of the Dungeon Master's Guide.

Any constructed base NPCs should not have a multiaction feature and must be approved by your DM before being used as a sidekick.

control of the DM.

- Your sidekick uses your proficiency bonus rather than their own. As you gain levels and increase your proficiency bonus, your sidekick's bonus also improves.
- When you first recruit your sidekick they gain proficiency in two skills, as well as common, and an additional language of your choice. They gain proficiency in all armor types and shields, as well as simple and martial weapons. In addition they become proficient in two saving throws of your choice.
- For each level you gain after 3rd, your sidekick gains an additional hit die and increases their hit points accordingly—adding 1d8 (or 5) + their Constitution modifier per level.
- Whenever you gain the Ability Score Improvement class feature, your sidekick's abilities also improve. Your sidekick can increase one ability score of your choice by 2, or they can increase two ability scores of your choice by 1. As normal, your sidekick can't increase an ability score above 20 using this feature.
- Your sidekick may use any equipment they are given so long as they meet its requirements. Additionally, they can attune to up to 3 magical items subject to any stated prerequisites.

Whilst your sidekick is within 60 feet of you and provided they can hear and understand you, they gain additional benefits from your direct command:

- Your sidekick may add your Charisma modifier to any damage they deal
- Your sidekick may add your Charisma modifier to any saving throws made against being charmed or frightened.

Combined Attacks

Starting at 6th level, you and your sidekick form a more potent fighting team. When you use the Attack action on your turn, if a sidekick can see you, you may spend your reaction to have them immediately make a single weapon attack.

Bodyguard

At 14th level, whenever a creature takes damage, and your sidekick can see the attack and is within 5 feet of the target they may choose to use their reaction to interpose themselves. Doing so causes the target creature not to take the damage, which is instead taken from the sidekick's hit points. The damage to the sidekick cannot be reduced or prevented in any way.

Academy of Wands

Students of the Academy of Wands choose to study and exploit magic, and its role as a potent, but erratic part of any battlefield. Seeking to combine magical powers with their strategic mastery, those who follow this academy focus on two of the eight schools of magic: divination and transmutation. Divination spells grant the strategist the ability

to predict the unpredictable, when their more mundane ingenuity fails them. Meanwhile transmutation grants them more ways to control and turn the tide of battle.

Spellcasting

Starting at 3rd level you are able to augment your tactical skills with the ability to cast spells. See chapter 10 of the Player's Handbook for the general rules of spellcasting and chapter 11 for the wizard spell list.

Cantrips. You learn two cantrips of your choice from the wizard spell list. You learn an additional wizard cantrip of your choice at 10th level.

Spell Slots. To cast one of these spells, you must expend a slot of the spell's level or higher.

For example, if you know the 1st-level spell *catapult* and have a 1st-level and 2nd-level spell slot available, you can cast *catapult* using either slot.

Spells Known of 1st-Level and Higher. At 3rd level you know three 1st-level spells of your choice, two of which you must choose from the divination and transmutation spells on the wizard spell list.

The Spells Known column of the Academy of Wands Spellcasting table shows when you learn more spells of 1st level or higher. Each of these spells must be a divination or transmutation spell of your choice, and must be of a level equal to or less than your maximum slot level. For instance, when you reach 7th level in this class, you can learn one new spell of 1st or 2nd level.

The spells you learn at 8th, 14th, and 20th level can come from any school of magic.

Whenever you gain a level in this class, you can replace one of the wizard spells you know with another spell of your choice from the wizard spell list. The new spell must be of a level less than or equal to your maximum slot level, and it must be a divination or transmutation spell unless you are replacing a spell you gained at 8th, 14th, or 20th level.

Spellcasting ability. Intelligence is your spellcasting ability for your wizard spells, as your magic stems from your aptitude for prediction and deduction. You use your Intelligence whenever a spell refers to your spellcasting ability.

Academy of Wands Spellcasting

| Strategist Level | Cantrips Known | Spells Known | Slot Preparation Points | Maximum Slot Level |
|------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 3rd | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1st |
| 4th | 2 | 4 | 3 | 1st |
| 5th | 2 | 4 | 3 | 1st |
| 6th | 2 | 4 | 3 | 1st |
| 7th | 2 | 5 | 8 | 2nd |
| 8th | 2 | 6 | 8 | 2nd |
| 9th | 2 | 6 | 8 | 2nd |
| 10th | 3 | 7 | 10 | 2nd |
| 11th | 3 | 8 | 10 | 2nd |
| 12th | 3 | 8 | 10 | 2nd |
| 13th | 3 | 9 | 16 | 3rd |
| 14th | 3 | 10 | 16 | 3rd |
| 15th | 3 | 10 | 16 | 3rd |
| 16th | 3 | 11 | 19 | 3rd |
| 17th | 3 | 11 | 19 | 3rd |
| 18th | 3 | 11 | 19 | 3rd |
| 19th | 3 | 12 | 23 | 4th |
| 20th | 3 | 13 | 23 | 4th |

Additionally, you use your tactics save DC or your tactics attack modifier whenever a spell you cast calls for a saving throw or an attack roll.

Tactical Casting

Strategists from the Academy of Wands are able to alter the number and type of spell slots they carry each day, granting them significant versatility as spell casters.

After a long rest you may choose to create spell slots at the same time as you prepare tactics. The Slot Preparation Points column of the Academy of Wands Spellcasting table describes the number of additional preparation points you are granted each day—these slot preparation points may not be used to fuel tactics, but can be used exclusively to purchase spell slots. The Creating Spell Slots table shows the cost of creating a spell slot of a given level.

You may also choose to expend your regular preparation points to purchase more spell slots, subject to the same rules.

You cannot create a spell slot of a higher level than your maximum slot level given in the Academy of Wands Spellcasting table.

Any regular preparation points spent on creating a spell slot are only recovered after a long rest and you can only restore up to your reduced preparation point maximum on a short rest. In addition, any spell slots you create with this feature vanish when you finish a long rest.

Creating Spell Slots

| Spell Slot Level | Preparation Point Cost |
|------------------|------------------------|
| 1st | 1 |
| 2nd | 2 |
| 3rd | 3 |
| 4th | 4 |

Duplication

At 6th level, your abilities in transmutation allow you to rapidly craft duplicates of an object. Doing so requires that you undertake a 1 minute ritual and expend 1 preparation point. The object you are seeking to duplicate must remain visible to you and within 30 feet of you throughout this ritual. Additionally, the object cannot be larger than 10 feet in any dimension.

When the ritual is complete, the duplicate item is indistinguishable from the original, except that it does not possess any magical properties of the item being copied. As part of this ritual you must expend materials of an equal worth to the original item.

Attempting to duplicate a creature with this feature yields a somewhat lifelike waxwork at a cost of 50 gold pieces.

Once you use this feature, you cannot use it again until you finish a long rest.

Deadly Premonition

Beginning at 14th level, you are able to use your powers of divination to foresee and prevent you and your allies' gravest injuries. As a reaction, whenever yourself or an ally within 30 feet of you suffers a critical hit, you may turn the attack into a normal hit. Any effects triggered by a critical hit are canceled. Once you use this feature, you cannot use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

TACTICS

If a tactic has prerequisites, you must have access to the specified equipment for the duration of the long rest in which it is prepared. Where a tactic lists a monetary cost, this must be paid in full whenever the tactic is employed.

Battlefield Medicine

Prerequisite: a healer's kit with at least one use remaining

In preparing themselves for any eventuality, many strategists choose to study the basics of trauma medicine. By expending one use of a healer's kit and 1 preparation point you may restore 1d6 hit points to any creature within 5 feet of you as an action. For each additional preparation point spent you can restore an additional 1d6 hit points, up to a maximum of 5d6.

Battlefield Misdirection

The simple act of misdirection can allow a strategist to substantially alter the flow of a fight. In preparing this tactic you have developed a range of feints and bluffs designed to undermine your enemies' actions. Whilst this tactic is prepared, you may spend preparation points in order to cause any of the effects described below.

1 preparation point. Whenever you hit a creature with a weapon attack, you may choose to immediately spend 1 preparation point to grant the creature disadvantage on the next attack roll it makes

3 preparation points. Whenever a creature within 30 feet is required to make an attack roll, you may immediately use your reaction at a cost of 3 preparation points to grant the creature disadvantage on that roll.

5 preparation points. Whenever a creature within 30 feet is required to make a saving throw, you may immediately use your reaction at a cost of 5 preparation points to grant the creature disadvantage on that roll.

Battlefield Mobility

Using an action to survey the battlefield, you can help guide allies that you can see within 60 feet of you—granting them the opportunity to reposition themselves for tactical advantage. When you do so you may choose any one of the effects below by expending the corresponding number of preparation points.

1 preparation point. At a cost of 1 preparation point per target, you may grant any number of creatures the chance to immediately use their reaction to move any distance up to their current speed without provoking attacks of opportunity.

3 preparation points. By expending 3 preparation points you can grant a single creature of your choice the opportunity to make a charge. This creature can immediately use their reaction to move any distance up to their current speed, if their movement ends within 5 feet of another creature they may make a single weapon attack against them. If this attack hits, the target must succeed on a Strength saving throw against your tactics save DC or be knocked prone.

5 preparation points. At a cost of 5 preparation points per target, you can immediately end the grappled, stunned, and incapacitated (provided they are not unconscious) conditions on any creature. Additionally, affected creatures are immune to attacks of opportunity until the end of their next turn.

Battlefield Stimulants

Prerequisite: a herbalism kit

Some strategists employ certain dangerous concoctions to help themselves and their allies fight with more vigor during combat. When this tactic is prepared you can use your action and expend some number preparation points to grant a single creature within 5 feet of you any of the effects described below. A creature cannot benefit from more than one use of this tactic at any time.

1 preparation point. By spending 1 preparation point, the affected creature gains advantage on all attack rolls and +2 damage on all hits, but gains vulnerability to all damage types except psychic. The effect lasts for 1 minute.

3 preparation points. By expending 3 preparation points, you can grant an ally the ability to keep fighting despite grievous wounds. If during the next hour the affected creature drops to 0 hit points and doesn't die outright, the creature may choose to immediately expend a hit die to drop to 1 hit point instead. Each time this feature is used the number of hit dice that must be expended to grant this effect doubles (such that the first use costs 1 Hit Die, the second costs 2, the third 4, and so on). This penalty resets at the end of a long rest. After a creature receives this effect they do not recover any Hit Dice during their next long rest.

5 preparation points. At a cost of 5 preparation points, the affected creature is able to make a single weapon attack as a bonus action on each of their turns for the next minute. When this effect ends, the selected creature immediately suffers a level of exhaustion.

Camouflage

Prerequisite: a disguise kit

Often the direct approach is liable to get you killed. Many strategists hence study the use of camouflage to stay hidden. Whilst this tactic is prepared you may choose any of the following terrain types: arctic, coast, desert, forest, grassland, mountain, swamp, underdark, or urban, and expend preparation points to grant any of the following effects. The chosen effect lasts for an hour or until an affected creature moves to a substantially different terrain type.

1 preparation point. At a cost of 1 minute and 1 preparation point, you are able to grant a single creature advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks whilst they remain within the chosen terrain type.

3 preparation points. At a cost of 1 minute and 3 preparation points, you are able to grant a number of creatures equal to your Intelligence modifier a +10 bonus on Dexterity (Stealth) checks whilst they remain within the chosen terrain type.

5 preparation points. At a cost of 1 minute and 5 preparation points, the selected creature is considered nonmagically invisible whilst within the chosen terrain type. This condition ends if the creature attacks or casts a spell.

Covering Strikes

By coordinating your movements and attacks, you can enable your allies to take up better defensive positions. Whilst this tactic is prepared, you may use your bonus action to improve your allies' guard in battle. Doing so you may choose any number of creatures within 30 feet of you, at a cost of 1 preparation point per creature, those targeted are granted the ability to take the dodge action as a bonus action on their next turn.

Decoy

With this tactic prepared you have a number of abilities designed to shift your enemies' attention — sometimes even a simple "Hey, look over there!" is enough to confuse matters. By spending an action and some number of preparation points you can use one of the effects described below. You may not have more than one effect of this tactic active at a time.

1 preparation point. Spending 1 preparation point you are able to nominate any willing creature within 60 feet of you as a decoy. Each creature of the decoy's choice within 30 feet of them must take an Intelligence saving throw against your tactics save DC. On a failed save the creature cannot willingly move more than 30 feet away from the decoy. This effect ends if the decoy is incapacitated or unconscious.

3 preparation points. Spending 3 preparation points you are able to nominate any willing creature within 60 feet of you as a decoy. Each creature of the decoy's choice within 30 feet of them must take an Intelligence saving throw against your tactics save DC. On a failed save the creature has disadvantage to attack anyone but the decoy, each affected creature may repeat the Intelligence save at the end of each of their turns; on a save the condition ends for them. This effect also ends if the decoy is incapacitated or dies.

5 preparation points. Spending 5 preparation points, you may select any number of creatures up to your Intelligence modifier to make an Intelligence saving throw. On a failed save the creatures must use their full movement and their action on their next turn in a dash towards a point of your choice within 120 feet. Affected creatures will not move into obviously dangerous terrain such as into lava or over a precipice. A creature under this effect does provoke attacks of opportunity if they move out of engagement.

Elemental Defense

Prerequisite: leatherworker's tools

With sufficient time, discipline, and planning it's possible to defend against most elementally based attacks using a selection of conditioned hides from various creatures. Whilst this tactic is prepared, you may spend 10 minutes at work, a monetary cost, and some number of preparation points to elicit any one of the following effects. A creature cannot benefit from more than one use of this tactic at a time.

1 preparation point. At a cost of 10 gold pieces and 1 preparation point you grant an affected creature advantage on all saving throws made to resist one of the following damage types of your choice: fire, cold, lightning, thunder, acid, or poison. This effect lasts for an hour.

3 preparation points. In exchange for 30 gold pieces and 3 preparation points you can grant a single creature damage resistance to one of the following damage types of your choice: fire, cold, lightning, thunder, acid, or poison. This effect lasts for an hour.

5 preparation points. At a cost of 100 gold pieces and 5 preparation points you can grant a single creature full elemental shielding against one of the following damage types of your choice: fire, cold, lightning, thunder, acid, poison, necrotic, or radiant. This shielding has a hit point maximum equal to $5 \times$ your strategist level. Whenever the shielded creature takes damage of the selected type, the elemental shielding takes the damage instead. If any damage reduces the elemental shielding to 0 hit points, the shielded creature takes any remaining damage. This effect lasts for an hour or until the shielding is destroyed.

Escapology

Prerequisite: thieves' tools

You have developed a range of techniques designed to get you out of a bind, quite literally. Whilst this tactic is prepared you may spend an action and 1 preparation point to allow you to immediately break yourself, or another creature within 5 feet of you, free of the grappled condition.

Alternatively, you may spend 3 preparation points and your action to immediately end the restrained condition.

Grenadier

Prerequisite: alchemist's Tools and at least one flask of alchemist's fire

Some strategists choose to exploit alchemical ingenuity to control the battlefield and hinder their enemies. Preparing this tactic allows the strategist to craft flasks of alchemist's fire with specialised properties, for use as grenades in combat. The grenade functions as regular alchemist's fire, but additionally gains the following effects.

1 preparation point. By expending a flask of alchemist's fire and 1 preparation point, all creatures within a 10 foot radius of the target (including the target themselves) must make a Constitution saving throw. On a failed save a creature is blinded and deafened until the end of your next turn.

3 preparation points. By expending a flask of alchemist's fire and 3 preparation points, all creatures within a 10 foot radius of the target (including the target themselves) must make a Constitution saving throw. On a failed save a creature is stunned for up to 1 minute. The target may repeat this Constitution save at the end of each of their turns, on a save the condition ends for them. The effect also ends for a creature if they take damage or if another creature uses an action to shake the creature out of its stupor.

5 preparation points. By expending a flask of alchemist's fire and 5 preparation points, all creatures within a 10 foot radius of the target (including the target themselves) must make a Constitution saving throw. On a failed save a creature is paralysed for up to 1 minute. The target may repeat this Constitution save at the end of each of their turns, on a save the condition ends for them. The effect also ends early for a creature if they take damage or if another creature uses an action to shake the creature back to awareness.

Gadgentry

Prerequisite: tinker's tools

The strategist is a master of deploying gadgets and other objects to devastating effect during combat. Whilst this tactic is prepared you may spend 1 preparation point in order to use an item as a bonus action on your turn.

In addition, you are able to improvise the use of an item even when it is not intended for you. During a short or long rest you may spend 5 preparation points and nominate a single magical object or scroll—doing so you are able to attune to and use this object ignoring all race, class, and level requirements. This effect lasts until your next short or long rest.

Guerrilla Warfare

Rapid strikes against an enemy from cover can allow even a small force to overcome significant odds. Whilst this tactic is prepared you are able to improve your team's combat stealth abilities. Spending an action you are able to expend some number of preparation points to grant your allies any one of

the following effects.

1 preparation point. At a cost of 1 preparation point per target, whenever an affected creature begins a turn hidden, they are able to take the hide action on that same turn as a bonus action. This effect lasts for a minute.

5 preparation points. At a cost of 5 preparation points per target, the affected creature is able to remain hidden even after making a weapon attack. The creature can only be detected by another creature searching as an action to find them and winning a Wisdom (Perception) contest versus their initial Dexterity (Stealth) check. This effect lasts for a minute or until the affected creature uses their action to do something other than make a single weapon attack on their turn.

Mental Conditioning

You have developed a range of drills and mental exercises designed to protect yourself from various psychological threats in combat. By spending a bonus action you are able to expend some number of preparation points to grant yourself any one of the following effects.

1 preparation point. At a cost of 1 preparation point, you may choose one of the following conditions: charmed, frightened, or stunned—for the next minute you gain advantage on all saving throws made to resist the selected condition. Additionally, whilst this effect is active, magic can't put you to sleep.

3 preparation points. At a cost of 3 preparation points, you may choose one of the following abilities: Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma—you gain advantage on all saving throws using the selected ability score that are made within the next minute. Additionally, whilst this effect is active, magic can't put you to sleep.

5 preparation points. At a cost of 5 preparation points, you may choose one of the following conditions: charmed, frightened, or stunned—for the next minute you become immune to the selected condition. Additionally, whilst this effect is active, magic can't put you to sleep.

Mind Games

Fear can be a powerful weapon when wielded correctly—you have learned a range of techniques of psychological warfare that you are able to prepare and deploy in battle. Whilst this tactic is prepared, whenever you hit a creature with an attack you are able to choose any number of creatures that you can see within a 15 foot radius of you to attempt to frighten. At a cost of 1 preparation point per target, each creature selected must take a Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save the creature is frightened of you. The target may repeat this saving throw at the end of each of their turns, on a save the condition ends for them. The condition also ends if you are knocked unconscious or otherwise incapacitated. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature becomes immune to this tactic for the next 24 hours.

Order in the Ranks

After initiative has been rolled but before combat has begun you may spend a preparation point to swap the initiative slots of any two willing creatures, including yourself, within 60 feet of you. This ability additionally swaps the surprised condition of the two allies if applicable.

The number of initiative slots that can be swapped increases by 1 for each additional preparation point that is spent.

Overwatch

Whilst wielding a ranged weapon, on your turn you may spend an action to set yourself in an overwatch position from where you can provide suppressing fire. The overwatch condition ends whenever you are engaged within melee range of a hostile creature, or when you willingly or unwillingly move.

Whilst in an overwatch position, whenever a creature that you can see within 60 feet of you uses their movement you may choose to spend your reaction and a minimum of 1 preparation point to make a single ranged weapon attack against them.

Whether or not the attack hits, the target must make a Wisdom saving throw to resist an effect that is dependent upon the number of points spent. The number of preparation points being spent must be declared before the saving throw is made.

1 preparation point. On a failed save the creature has disadvantage on their next attack roll.

3 preparation points. If the creature fails their save they are stunned until the end of their next turn.

5 preparation points. When a creature fails this save it is as though they are under the influence of the spell *confusion*. The target may repeat this Wisdom save at the end of each of their turns, on a save the condition ends for them.

Physical Conditioning

You are adept at physically preparing yourself for the battles ahead and have developed a range of exercises and practices designed to protect yourself from various threats in combat. When this tactic is initially prepared, you gain temporary hit points equal to your strategist level. Additionally, by spending a bonus action you are able to expend some number of preparation points to grant yourself any one of the following effects.

1 preparation point. At a cost of 1 preparation point, you may choose one of the following conditions: blinded, deafened, paralyzed, or poisoned—for the next minute you gain advantage on all saving throws made to resist the selected condition.

3 preparation points. At a cost of 3 preparation points, you may choose one of the following abilities: Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution—you gain advantage on all saving throws using the selected ability score that are made within the next minute.

5 preparation points. At a cost of 5 preparation point, you may choose one of the following conditions: blinded, deafened, paralyzed, or poisoned—for the next minute you become immune to the selected condition.

Sacrifice

Sometimes casualties are unavoidable—in those cases, the mark of a good strategist is being able to turn tragedy into opportunity. Whenever a nonhostile creature within 60 feet of you is killed or knocked unconscious you can immediately use your reaction and preparation points to grant your allies the chance to counterattack. Choose any number of friendly creatures within 60 feet, who can see and hear you, at a cost of 1 preparation point per nominated creature. Each affected creature is then able to immediately make a single weapon attack against a target of their choice.

Studied Strikes

With concentration and skill, you are able to use your intellect to guide your attacks. Whilst this tactic is prepared, you may spend a bonus action and 1 preparation point to focus yourself—doing so allows you to use your Intelligence ability score instead of Strength or Dexterity for the purpose of any weapon attack and damage rolls made in the next hour.

In addition, whilst this effect is active, whenever you use Intelligence to successfully hit with a weapon attack on your turn you may choose to make it a deadly strike. You are then able to increase the damage by 1d8 per preparation point spent up to a maximum of 5d8. This damage is of the same type as the weapon with which the attack was made.

Weapon Preparation

Prerequisite: smith's tools

Preparing your weapons for combat and making sure they are suitable against the foes you seek to fight is a crucial part of any battleplan. With this tactic prepared you have the ability to temporarily re-engineer your weapons and calibrate them for the enemies you are facing. By spending 10 minutes at work, a monetary cost, and some number of preparation points, you are able to apply one of the following effects to a weapon of your choice. Unfortunately, due to the makeshift nature of your work, all attacks made with weapons modified in this way are made at a -1 penalty to hit.

1 preparation point. Spending 1 preparation point and 5 gold pieces worth of material from your smith's tools, the selected weapon counts as silvered for the next hour.

3 preparation points. Spending 3 preparation points and 30 gold pieces worth of material from your smith's tools, the damage of the selected weapon can be converted to one of the following damage types of your choice: fire, cold, lightning, thunder, acid, or poison. This effect lasts for the next hour.

5 preparation points. Spending 5 preparation points and 100 gold pieces worth of material from your smith's tools, the damage of the selected weapon can be converted to one of the following damage types of your choice: fire, cold, lightning, thunder, acid, or poison. In addition, on a successful hit the weapon deals an additional 1d8 damage of one of the following choices: force, psychic, necrotic, or radiant damage. This effect lasts for the next hour.

With a Little Help

You are always able to create openings in your enemy's defenses or opportunities for your allies to exploit. Whilst this tactic is prepared, you may spend a bonus action and 1 preparation point to focus on coordinating the team's actions—doing so allows you to take the help action as a bonus action on each of your turns for the next hour.

In addition, whenever you use the help action in combat to grant an ally advantage against a specified target creature, you may spend 1 preparation point to grant an additional ally advantage against the same target.

Multiclassing

The strategist follows all the normal rules for multiclassing outlined in the Player's Handbook. In addition, the prerequisites and the proficiencies gained for multiclassing into the strategist are listed below.

MULTICLASSING PREREQUISITES

| Class | Ability Score Minimum |
|------------|-----------------------|
| Strategist | Intelligence 13 |

STRATEGIST MULTICLASSING PROFICIENCIES

| Class | Proficiencies |
|------------|---|
| Strategist | Light armor, medium armor, simple weapons, martial weapons, one gaming set of your choice |

The Strategist Class By

Tom Snowden (@headtotable)

Contact: tom.snowden@gmail.com

Version 1.2

Also, if you've made it this far, maybe check out my tabletop RPG design podcast Head to Table at

<https://headtotable.com/>

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